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Construction Industry News from City Hall

*Superintendent of Central Inspection
Kurt Schroeder*

Building Permit price reduction

Effective July 8, 2002 the Office of Central Inspection has reduced its Premium on Building Permits from 25% down to 5%. This was recommended by Central Inspection and approved by City Council action on July 2, 2002.

Also, just a reminder that beginning on September 1, 2002, Central Inspection will begin the license and certificate renewal process for 2003. Contractors and certificate holders will have September through January to renew without penalty. Also there will be no increase for any license or certificate type for 2003. You should receive your renewal application forms by September 1st.

Gary Cortner, OCI Administrative Serv. Supervisor

Installation & Inspection of Underground Service Conduits

Effective July 1, 2002, the electrical section of the Office of Central Inspection (OCI) discontinued transformer secondary underground service lateral conduit inspections within the City of Wichita. After this date Westar is assuming responsibility for transformer secondary underground service conduit installation inspections within Wichita, and they must conform to the requirements as set forth in Westar Energy Service Standards. The use of type P&C (Power and Communication) duct will no longer be permitted to be installed for underground service lateral conduits for one and two-family dwellings within the City of Wichita.

This affects only the inspection of transformer underground secondary service lateral conduits where the meter enclosure is installed on the building. If the meter enclosure is installed on Westar's transformer, then the underground service lateral conduit from the electric meter to the building will be inspected by our office and must be installed as per the applicable requirements of the NEC.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact our office at 268-4465.

Wayne L. Bolen, Construction Inspection Supervisor, Electrical / Elevator

Revised Service Tap Application and Inspection Process for One and Two Family Dwellings

A committee composed of representatives from the construction industry, the Water and Sewer Department, and the Office of Central Inspection recently reviewed the process for applying for, scheduling, and installing water services. Some of the specific issues which were addressed by the review are as follows:

1. The narrow window of time for installation following receipt of the plumbing release and the working of the locate request.
2. Inefficiencies in scheduling of service crews relating to the need to switch crews from one location to another in response to plumbing releases (in other words, lost time relating to travel time as a result of crews moving from one location to another in response to closing timetables on houses).

Revision to Service Application and Installation Process

Following considerable discussion, industry and City representatives proposed the following changes to the process:

1. **The builder/contractor will pay for the tap and equity fees at the time of building permit issuance.**
2. **Replace the plumbing release with a “foundation release” from the builder to the City which would serve as the mechanism to begin the service installation process.**
 - **The foundation release would be sent in after the foundation/basement inspection process was concluded.**
 - **The builder/contractor will flag the desired location of the service installation with a two by four placed in the ground approximately two feet deep with the house number painted on it. A fee of \$150 will be assessed if the location is not clearly marked at the time the installation crew arrives. The City will attempt to contact the builder if a stake is not found but will not remain on site more than fifteen minutes before the service call fee is assessed.**
 - **The tap fee applicant would be responsible for any and all damage to the service installation and would need to pay for the repair of these damages prior to water service turn on.**
 - **Elevation of service installations are to be set 7 to 10 inches above the curb.**
 - **The service installation crew will mark the location of the pigtail (the outlet connection), by use of a two by four.**
 - **The plumber running the consumer line will be responsible for making the connection to the pigtail.**

These changes are designed to result in a lengthened time frame during which installation of the service can take place, thereby avoiding the timing issues related to the closing on the house. The result will be improved scheduling. Also, water will be available to the site at an earlier stage in the construction process. Briefly, the following is the outline of the responsibilities of the various parties involved in the revised process:

Tap Applicant/General Contractor

1. Pay for all tap and plant equity fees at the time of building permit issuance.

	Rates for August 1, 2002	Rates for September 1, 2002
Water Meter Fee:	500	500
Water Equity:	940	1060
Sewer Equity:	500	760

2. Upon completion of the foundation stage of the project, notify Water & Sewer of the need to schedule the installation, preferably by accessing the City's web site (www.wichitagov.org/installwater), fax (268-4514) or letter addressed to:

System Planning & Development, 455 N. Main, Wichita, Ks. 67202

All communications are to include the address, building permit number, legal description, and an indication of desired meter box location, for example front or side street and if front which side of driveway. Accessing the City's web site will walk the applicant through the scheduling process and will provide confirmation of the receipt of request, the tentative date of the installation, and the actual date scheduled for the installation.

3. Mark the desired location for the service clearly using a two by four with the house numbers noted on it (failure to have the site marked at the time the installation crew arrives will result in a \$150 fine).

Plumber

1. Locate the marker left by the installation crew marking the location of the pigtail.
2. Hook up the consumer line to the pigtail.

City of Wichita Water & Sewer Department

1. Schedule a service installation crew (either the City's or a crew under contract), to install the service and communicate the projected date of the installation at the time the written request from the tap applicant/general contractor is received.
2. Install the service tap to specifications and mark the location of the pigtail connection.

If the tap applicant/general contractor wishes to be responsible for the billing (this should be communicated to the City at the time of the application), the City will set a meter immediately. If not, the service will be secured with a plug. ***These revised procedures will go into effect on August 1, 2002.***

Weather-Resistive Barrier

I had planned to have information on weather-resistive barriers in this issue of CINCH, but the research is taking longer than anticipated. There will be a separate mailing in the near future.

*Ray Sledge,
Building Construction Inspection Supervisor*

Use of Street Right-of-Way

If the work you are about to perform is going to require you to have vehicles, equipment or materials within the street right-of-way, most likely you will be required to obtain a **USE OF STREET** permit. Please visit the City Engineers Office on the east side of the 7th floor of the City Building to discuss the possible need of a **USE OF STREET** permit and other issues related to the safe closure of approach traffic lanes.

If you have any questions please contact Mickey Thull at 268-4598 and he will be happy to discuss the situation with you and facilitate the permit process. If he is not available please ask for Linda Firshing or she can be reached directly at 268-4418.

Fireplace Inspections

There seems to be some confusion concerning who is responsible for scheduling fireplace inspections. Currently fireplaces are inspected at the rough-in stage. If they are solid fuel burning, the building inspector inspects them. If they are gas-burning appliances, the mechanical inspector inspects them. The problem that some contractors are having is that not all mechanical contractors, who install the heating and air systems in a house, install the fireplaces. In this situation, when a fireplace is not ready for inspection or has corrections, the fireplace inspection failure falls back on the mechanical contractor. This, in turn, delays approval of the rest of the mechanical rough-in inspection.

Effective immediately, any mechanical contractor that installs both the HVAC and the fireplaces on a given job will be required to call in both the **“250 Rough Mechanical”** and the **“360 Fireplace/Stove”** inspections on the automated Telus inspection scheduling system. If a different contractor installs the fireplace, then that contractor needs to schedule the **“360 Fireplace/Stove”** inspection. The framing inspection will not be approved until fireplaces are properly scheduled, inspected and signed on the job card.

Dan Leidy, Construction Inspection Supervisor, Plumbing / Mechanical



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